

# Lorton Valley Homeowners Association Community Newsletter Spring/Summer 2015

## **HOA Board of Directors Message**

Welcome to a new spring/summer season here in Lorton Valley! We wish to extend a heartfelt welcome to our new owners and residents who have made Lorton Valley their choice of residence. We are glad you are here and hope to meet you at any one of our summertime community activities, our quarterly HOA meetings, or other social events we may host.

For all our residents please keep in mind that, while our community continues to grow and mature we must be ever-mindful that as our community grows and matures so too should we look for growth and maturity among individual homeowners. Too often over these past years have the HOA Board of Directors found it necessary to take aggressive action against a homeowner and/or tenant who demonstrated a gross inability to abide by rules and regulations established for this community.

In this issue of the Lorton Valley Community Newsletter you will find numerous articles related to home, yard maintenance, vehicle operation, parking, and issues of general good behavior one would expect to experience in a community the size of Lorton Valley. Residents of this community who desire a great community in which to live and raise a family, even if only for a few years, must recognize and give effort to those things that make good communities. *Collective effort, neighborliness, respect for self, home and community, and participation and/or support of community activities.*

## **Spring/Summer Events**

### **Pool Opening/Pool Pass**

The Lorton Valley HOA pool season begins Saturday, May 23 , Memorial Day Weekend. To use the pool you have to have a current 2015 pool pass. Download the [2015 Pool Pass Form](#). Residents wanting a pool pass must fill out and submit the Form to the Property Manager for one of the two services needed:

- 1) To receive a 2015 sticker for your existing photo pool pass: Stop by the community clubhouse office on Tuesday or Thursdays from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM with the completed form.

2) To obtain a Photo ID Pool Pass: Complete the form and bring to the Clubhouse (see calendar for dates and times).

All pool pass applications must be signed by the homeowner. Renters must also bring with them a copy of the current, signed lease agreement. See [Resolution 14-01 Procedures Relating to the Leasing of Lots](#).

See Randy Kline for your questions. [randy.kline@fsresidential.com](mailto:randy.kline@fsresidential.com)

### **Cookouts at the Pool**

As we have done for the past several years we will continue our tradition of hosting three (3) free poolside cookouts for our residents. Make plans to join us for hotdogs (beef and turkey), hamburgers (beef and turkey), chips, and drinks as we celebrate the summer! Place these dates on your calendar: Memorial Day weekend (official pool opening), 4th of July weekend, and Labor Day weekend (official pool closing). Look on the Lorton Valley HOA webpage for specific dates.

### **Night swim at the Pool**

Refer to the calendar on our web page for specific dates for our night swims. Generally nights swims are every other Friday night from 8 pm to 10 pm. So...beginning Friday, 12 June 2015, bring the kids and come join us for a swim “under the lights” with ice cream treats and a little music. Hope to see you there.

## **Community Issues**

### **Trash Dumping on Streets and in the Wood-line**

Residents are once again reminded that dumping of trash on the streets, along the side of streets or in the wood-line around the perimeter of the community is “littering”, which is a violation of Virginia State Law. It is also unnecessary, unwelcome, and indicative of poor social and community behavior.

We need all residents to continue to help curb this behavior. If you observe littering please ask the offender to stop, note where they live or record the license plate and make or model of the vehicle and report it to the police. Please also provide the information to our Property Management Company, FirstService Mgt. Services, via phone or the Lorton Valley Community web-page. [www.Lortonvalley.com](http://www.Lortonvalley.com) or 703-385-1133

Please discard all garden and lawn waste (clippings, leaves, flower pots, Christmas trees, etc.) as directed by our trash pick-up policies.

Over five (5) years ago Management positioned approximately 10 decorative trash receptacles in key areas of the community. We are counting on residents to ensure that you will put them to their intended use and reduce the impact of littering.

## **Parking**

We continue to see numerous parking violations in our community. Parking in Lorton Valley is a controlled activity complete with restrictions and prohibitions on where and how you can park. Residents are reminded that the parking of any commercial vehicles in Lorton Valley is strictly prohibited. Commercial vehicles may not be parked in driveways, in any visitor parking lots or along clearly marked street/roadway associated with Lorton Valley. **Note: The presence of yellow curb paint and/or “parking prohibited” signs are an obvious indicator that parking is not allowed.**

Residents are further reminded that your first parking option is your garage. HOA and County regulations stipulate that a garage may NOT be used for excessive storage and or converted to living space or pet space. The garage must have room enough to park the number cars it was designed to hold. A 1-car garage MUST accommodate 1 car. A 2-car garage MUST accommodate 2 cars. The second parking option is your driveway.

The third option is the common area parking lots provided near and around each street. These spaces currently are available on a first come first serve basis. They are for overflow parking and not intended to take the place of your driveway! They are not to be used for vehicle storage and/or long-term static parking. They are NOT your personal parking spaces. The visitor lots may not be monopolized by a multi-car resident. If you have too many cars to park in your garage and driveway and have taken up an unreasonable number of visitor parking spaces you are subject to appropriate sanctions.

You also may not perform any major vehicle maintenance anywhere in Lorton Valley including your garage and/or driveway.

Offending vehicles under our current parking policy (view the parking policy at: [www.lortonvalley.com](http://www.lortonvalley.com)) will be tagged and towed at owners expense. Further violations will result in application of a fine of up to \$25 a day until the issue has been corrected.

Repeat offenders may have all community privileges revoked. After the owner is given a hearing opportunity notice the “fining” options are a onetime charge of \$50 or \$10 per day for up to 90 days that they remain in violation.

## **Speeding**

We are again nearing summer break. Kids are out and about, running, biking, etc. - even more than they usually are. It is, therefore, imperative that we make every effort to abide by the 25 MPH speed limit established for our community. There is **absolutely no reason** to exceed this limit. You are also reminded that you **MUST** stop for any school bus with flashing red lights.

Residents are reminded that the speed limit along Windermere Hill Dr. is 25 MPH, not 35 MPH or above. All other streets the speed limit is 15 MPH. Please adjust your driving speed accordingly.

We continue our outreach and cooperation with the Fairfax County Police Department to establish a heightened presence during the summer and periodically provide them vehicle and license information on chronic offenders. The Board has the authority to sanction aggressive drivers through special assessments (fines) and denial of community privileges. General safety sense informs us all that speeding unnecessarily endangers residents, especially children, as well as the driver.

## **S l o w d o w n !**

### **Unattended Children**

Residents are reminded that small children (generally children under 12 years of age) should not be left alone, left outside unsupervised by an adult,, allowed to play on community playgrounds or allowed to roam the community on bikes without an adult present. News stories abound almost on a daily basis where a young person has either been abducted or threatened with abduction. It is extremely important that parents note this caution and begin the process of properly monitoring and controlling the whereabouts of your children.

### **HOA Fee Obligations**

As most of you are aware the Lorton Valley HOA is a managed community whose operation costs are funded through monthly assessments attached to each home in Lorton Valley. Upon purchasing your home and signing your mortgage paperwork you have agreed to: abide by the HOA covenants, pay your monthly assessment. If, at any time you fail to render your monthly assessment as required, the monthly operating budget can quickly slide into an operating deficit that can carry over into the following months requiring us to reduce spending, cancel contracts and make other adjustments to balance the budget.

Failure to pay assessments in a timely manner also has serious consequences for the homeowner who will be assessed a \$25 late fee to all delinquent accounts after the tenth of each month. Late fees can quickly add up. Continued payment delinquencies will eventually find the HOA and homeowner in Fairfax County General District Court where the HOA will sue for collection, damages and possible foreclosure. To avoid this issue please pay your assessments on time each month. If you are having difficulties please come talk to us. We will work with you on this issue.

### **A Big Thank You!**

While this newsletter is referencing many issues we are having in the community we want to make it very clear that one thing we do not lack is homeowners and tenants who truly do care about the community and their individual homes. Take a drive or a walk around the community and for the most part you see well maintained and very diverse landscaping, deck designs and yards, no matter how small they may be. The Board appreciates the example you set and urge those of you who have difficulty maintaining your home's exterior and plot at an acceptable level look around you and where possible work to emulate the great things many of your neighbors are doing.

## **Spring/Summer Home Maintenance Issues and Tips**

### **Clogged Rain Gutters & Downspouts**

Residents are again advised to clean their rain gutters and downspouts at least twice a year, but especially before or after the major rainy season. Management has received numerous complaints of overflowing rain gutters. We have also observed this problem during property inspections and right out our back-doors on neighboring homes. This is a persistent problem that not only impacts the affected home but has, in community terms, a significant effect on the structure of the home, presents a long-term degradation of community appearance and represents a spirit of unnecessary neglect. Right now is one of the best times to perform this service. Cleaning the gutters and downspouts prohibits debris from collecting and subsequently clogging causing rain to spill over the gutters. This spillover will eventually damage the roof, framing and trim potentially requiring expensive repairs.

There are numerous companies advertising online specializing in this service. They also offer deals whereby they will install gutter screens at a reasonable price while performing the gutter cleaning for free. A call (and a small fee) can help you avoid a potentially much higher cost later.

### **Deck and Deck Rails**

Most of our homes are at least 10 years old now. That means many aspects of our homes need to be closely inspected to ensure they are still serviceable. Decks and railings are a prime area of the home that gets severely impacted by weather. Decks should be pressure cleaned and resealed at least every other year. Deck posts, railings, trim boards, etc., need to be examined for peeling paint, rotting wood, and structure integrity. Replace as necessary. Door trim needs to be inspected and repaired as necessary to ensure drafts and water seepage is eliminated. Take the time to do these preventative measures. You will enjoy your home that much more.

## **Caulking**

Caulking around windows and doors needs to be thoroughly inspected to ensure a weather tight seal is still evident. Any cracking, shrinking or separating is evidence that your caulking has failed and needs replacing. Ensure all old caulking is removed and new caulking applied by a qualified carpenter.

## **SPRING/SUMMER GARDENING/LAWN CARE**

### **Spring**

- Sweep up winter lawn debris to prevent mold.
- Roll lawn to level out uneven areas caused by freezing and thawing soil.
- Aerate to open up compacted soil for warmer temperatures.
- Overseed bare areas.
- Apply pre-emergent herbicide in early spring.
- Start mowing only after grass has started to actively grow again. (Mower height depends on your species of grass and your climate, but a general rule is to mow slightly lower in the spring and fall; higher in the summer.)
- Apply a light dressing of low-nitrogen fertilizer in late spring.
- Remove all weeds and dead plants. Keep garden areas free of weeds and dead plants throughout the growing season.
- Properly trim lower branches and suckers off trees, prune trees to give a clean, symmetrical look.

### **Summer**

- Apply grub control product in early summer.
- Mow grass regularly. Protect yourself from sun and heat.
- Trim grass edges with lawn edgers.
- Fertilize and feed if necessary, but do not use these products during dry spells.
- Water grass as needed. Water deeply and only when really needed.

### **Yard Waste**

With the beginning of the yard care 2015 Spring Season, here are some requirements for collection of Yard Waste:

- Yard waste collection is provided on Wednesday's from March 1st to December 24th yearly. This waste will be placed curbside near the home's driveway, Tuesday evening before or the morning prior to 7:00 am on Wednesday.
- Yard waste is classified as grass clippings, vegetative plant waste, woody plant waste such as branches and twigs. Grass clippings will be placed in waste disposal bags and secured from spillage.
- Brush will be cut in lengths no greater than four (4) feet, with limbs no greater than six (6) inches in diameter and tied into bundles. These bundles must be no greater than two (2) feet in diameter.

- Larger brush collections or tree limb removal of greater than 6 inches in diameter must be coordinated with Republic Trash and Recycling at additional homeowner expense.

### **Common Area Maintenance Update**

We continue to see improvement in common areas. Grass is green and improving in condition and thickness. We continue to monitor closely the status of many of our trees and are working with our property maintenance company (Pro-Grounds, Inc.) to ensure replacement takes place sometime near the beginning of mid to late fall this year. Ground work and plantings around the front entrance will not take place for at least the next year while we experience the ongoing widening of Lorton Road. There are several areas in the community where erosion is eating away at yards of residents. We have looked at all of these areas with our landscaping contractor who has provided their expertise to mitigate the issues. If you know of a common area that needs our attention please let us know.

The tot lots (playground areas) will undergo major repair and some replacement activity this spring. They will also be cleaned-up and improved for water drainage. We also have motion activated lighting and cameras that come on when people enter the area after hours. This is a safety precaution. We do not want anyone hanging around the lots after dark and creating a nuisance

### **Pet Cleanup Issues**

The Lorton Valley Community has many residents with pets in their families. Please curb your pets and keep them on a leash at all times. Dog waste stations are provided throughout the community.

Types of violations to report:

Not picking up and disposing of pet waste  
Dog off leash  
Dog in Tot Lots

Please report violators with the following information:

Time of sighting  
Location  
Description of dog & dog walker  
Address of offender (this is key for notification)  
Photo if possible

Without valid feedback from the community, we cannot issue a notice to the responsible resident. Reporting names will be held confidentially.

Send this information to the Customer Service Center 703.385.1133 or voice mail to same number ext. 516 or email [randy.kline@fsresidential.com](mailto:randy.kline@fsresidential.com). or stop by the Onsite Managers Office at the Lorton Valley Community Clubhouse, 9380 Windermere Hill Dr.

For further information on this issue, visit the Lorton Valley Community website at [www.lortonvalley.com](http://www.lortonvalley.com) You are also reminded that pets are not allowed in the playground areas.

### **Basketball Court**

Residents are reminded that the basketball court adjacent to the pool is for resident use only. Guests are permitted as long as a resident sponsor is with them. Patrons of the court are reminded of the Rules of Use posted on the gate. Opening time is: 10 am. Closing time is: 8 pm. **You should be off the court at 8 pm. No exceptions.** Share the court. Please keep profanity to a minimum. There are homes with small children nearby. Clean up all trash before you leave. Failure to abide by these simple rules will result in closure of the court. The Board of Directors have previously shut down the court for two years due to poor behavior. We will not hesitate to shut the court down again, if circumstances warrant. The court is monitored by a security camera.

### **New Issues/Updates**

#### **Security Patrols**

Based on the the level of criminal activity experienced in the community over the past several years the HOA Board of Directors has determined that additional efforts will be made to reduce the potential for unwanted activity in the community. Effective on or about end of May we will engage a private security company (Signal 88) to provide random uniformed patrols during key hours of the day and night. The company currently provides this service to several communities in the local area with good results. For further information please contact Randy Kline, Property Manager.

#### **Private Road Resurfacing**

During the next 30-45 days blacktop resurfacing and crack repairs will begin on our private roads in the Lorton Valley North sub-division. The crack repairs and resurfacing will serve to extend the life of the existing road surface. Once the schedule has been finalized residents affected by the repairs will be notified. Areas of resurfacing will be blocked off for 24-hours to give the necessary time to cure. All vehicle traffic will be restricted from those areas as needed.

#### **Bond Release - Village of Lorton Valley and Gunston Commons Sub-divisions**

Fairfax County continues to work off all issues related to developer deficiencies in the Village of Lorton Valley and Gunston Commons subdivisions. Several deadlines for bond release have come and gone as new issues are discovered. We will continue to monitor the work and provide updates as necessary.

**Community Inspections**

Property inspections will commence in late May and be completed end of June.

Inspections consists of community walk-arounds conducted by outside inspectors.

Primaryy focus of these is inspections to highlight mainly structural deficiencies in home maintenance that requires corrective action. All recorded violations will be given 30-60 days for corrective action. Continued noncompliance will ultimately result in monetary assessments against the property owner.

As always, we stand ready to address your concerns and questions. We may not always have the answer you want to hear. However, we will continue to focus on the issues most affecting the overall well-being of the community.

Board of Directors  
Lorton Valley HOA